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**Division of  
Land Pollution Control**



Today's "throwaway society" uses and discards a staggering number of products. Every man, woman and child in Illinois generates from five to six pounds of solid waste each day.

Industry also contributes to the growing waste problem by increasing production to meet consumer demands. The disposal of these wastes is a serious problem in our state and throughout our country.

In the past, waste products were disposed of in the air, water and land. Today, the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, the Resource Conservation & Recovery Act (RCRA), the Environmental Protection Act and Pollution Control Board regulations restrict the emission, discharge and disposal of these substances into the air, water, and land.

Prior to 1970, pollution control efforts were directed only toward the most extreme violations of the state's public health laws. With the establishment of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Division of Land Pollution Control has made excellent progress in closing open dumps and managing solid and hazardous wastes.

## **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)**

Federal legislation known as the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is a driving force in solid waste management. The intent of the Act is as follows:

- to control hazardous wastes,
- to increase the opportunity for resource recovery and recycling,
- and to provide for the environmentally acceptable disposal of all future wastes.

In May, 1982, the IEPA was granted interim authorization from USEPA to administer a portion of the hazardous waste program under RCRA. The state was authorized, in lieu of USEPA, to operate a program which tracked the flow of hazardous waste from "cradle-to-grave". The USEPA also delegated authority for the state to implement record-keeping and reporting systems. This interim authorization allowed the Agency to regulate generators and transporters of hazardous waste and enforce operating standards for facilities that treat, store and dispose of hazardous waste.

In 1986, the IEPA was delegated final authority to administer a hazardous waste management program under RCRA. Final authorization empowers the state to issue RCRA permits subject to certain limitations, for hazardous waste storage, treatment and disposal facilities and to enforce final facility design and operating requirements.

## Landfill Siting

Senate Bill 172 (Public Act 82-682) assigns to county and municipal governments the responsibility of approving the location of all new pollution control facilities which must obtain IEPA permits before they are built.

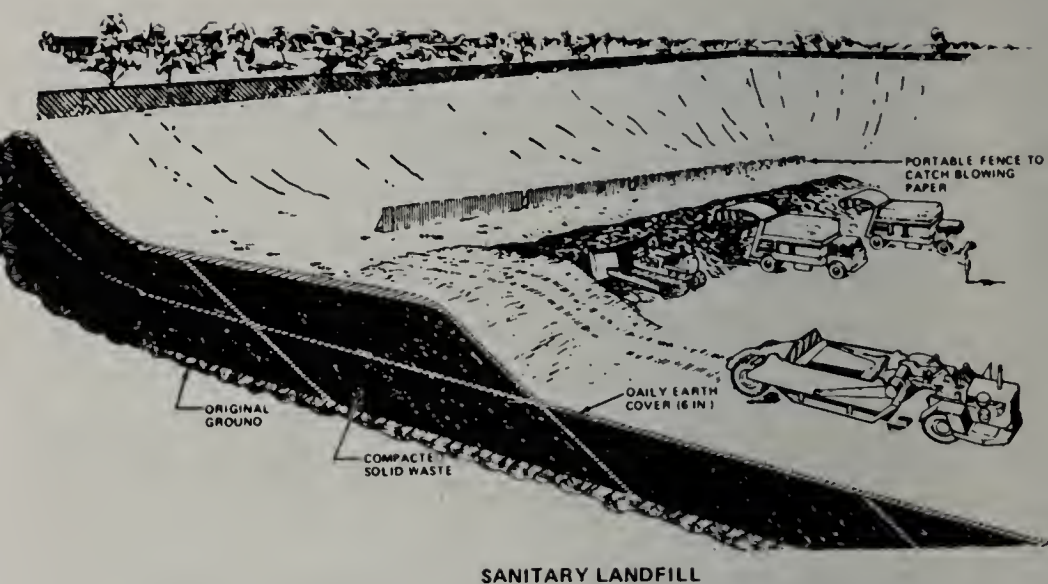
SB 172 explains the siting process local officials must follow in approving or disapproving "regional pollution control facilities" such as landfills, incinerators or other waste management operations serving more than one town. If the new facility is anything other than a regional pollution control facility, the siting law does not prescribe the process to be followed but does authorize local officials to exercise their zoning authority over the location of the facility.

## Landfill Permits

Geology, hydrology and aesthetics are among the many important considerations that must be taken into account when evaluating a landfill proposal. Landfill designers must submit an engineering plan, evidence of local siting approval if required, and obtain a permit from IEPA before a landfill can be constructed. Once the site has been developed, and a request for an operating permit has been made to IEPA, an inspection of the constructed landfill is performed by the Agency. The purpose of this inspection is to determine if the site has been developed in accordance with approved plans and specifications and the terms of the developmental permit. If the site is found to meet these requirements, an operating permit may be issued and waste disposal activity may begin. Any modification to the design or operation of the landfill is subject to additional permit requirements. Designers of hazardous waste disposal facilities must follow a different permit procedure.

Once in operation, the landfill operator must spread, compact and cover municipal refuse with a





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minimum six-inch layer of earth at the end of each day. The landfill is inspected by Agency field personnel. In addition, special groundwater monitoring wells are installed around the landfill site. Water taken from these wells is regularly sampled and tested several times a year for any sign of pollution.

After a landfill site is properly closed, graded and seeded with at least two feet of clean compacted earth, considerable thought should be given to its appropriate use. Land that was once a liability can become an asset when converted to other productive uses.

## “Clean Illinois”

In 1984, Gov. James R. Thompson and legislative leaders implemented the most ambitious hazardous waste cleanup program in the state’s history. “Clean Illinois” represents a \$20 million, three-year effort to develop an expanded program for cleanup and protection from abandoned and uncontrolled hazardous waste sites in Illinois. Under Gov. Thompson’s “Build Illinois” program, an additional \$90 million was approved to further accelerate the state’s hazardous waste cleanup objectives.

Although the majority of money is targeted for waste removal and cleanup work at orphan chemical waste sites, the funds are also used for a number of other hazardous waste management and cleanup activities. This work involves:

1. identifying new sites that may be eligible for federal Superfund or state cleanup assistance;
2. providing state matching funds to make federal grant monies available for cleanup of Superfund sites;

3. fast track construction starts for state-funded cleanup projects;
4. contingency funding for emergency response and immediate removal actions;
5. enhancing the state's groundwater protection system; and
6. chemical safety research to determine the toxicity of hazardous substances; study hazardous waste disposal problems and develop alternatives.

## Mobile Incineration

Illinois is in the national limelight with its progressive approach in cleaning up abandoned and uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The state is leading the country in this area by utilizing mobile incineration systems. Mobile incineration will be used at qualified locations to destroy hazardous substances on-site where they are found.

Limited off-site commercial landfill capacity exists in Illinois for disposal of certain hazardous industrial wastes. However, there is not sufficient room to dispose of all of the residue from hazardous waste sites targeted for cleanup by the IEPA and USEPA. Furthermore, many chemical compounds found at these sites are not suitable for landfills and are prohibited from land disposal by state and federal regulations. By incinerating hazardous or toxic wastes at the place where they are found, the volume and toxicity of the waste can be reduced, eliminating the expense and liability of transporting untreated materials to distant disposal sites.

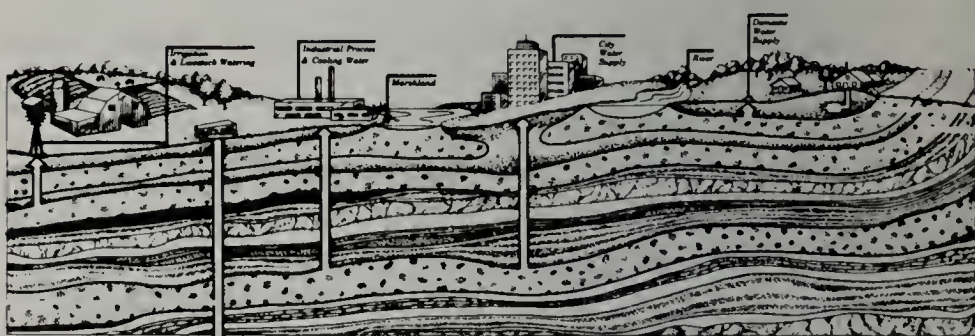
The Division of Land Pollution Control is also involved with other environmental issues:

## Groundwater Protection

Groundwater is an important Illinois resource. Over 1,700 Illinois communities rely on groundwater as a source of drinking water. Every day, nearly a billion gallons of water are used by Illinois homes, factories, businesses and farms for drinking water, manufacturing, cleaning and irrigation.



Concerns with groundwater quality have usually involved natural contamination by minerals or bacterial contamination from human or animal wastes. Today's concerns about groundwater quality center on toxic and hazardous substances.



To identify these substances the IEPA has established a groundwater monitoring network. The network centers around the sampling and testing of about 3,400 public water supply wells in the state. The Agency has also developed a protection plan for groundwater.

## Resource Recovery

In today's competitive business world, resource recovery and recycling programs can mean the difference between success or failure. The IEPA has encouraged the use of waste management alternatives through disposal fees and regulatory incentives. To meet the environmental concerns of Illinois citizens, Gov. James R. Thompson introduced a \$10 million solid waste program. The program known as the "Solid Waste Management Act" is designed to promote the development of alternatives and new technology to handle solid waste and to reduce reliance on land disposal.

Source reduction, recycling and incineration are a few of the waste management objectives to be met for the program to be effective.

To accomplish these goals, the state offers:

- Recycling grants to encourage increased recycling and reuse of waste products.
- Planning grants and technical assistance to local governments to address solid waste management.

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- Research and development to find alternative waste disposal techniques and to develop new industries.
  - Expansion of the Industrial Materials Exchange Service, which is operated by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce. This service seeks to convert one industry's waste into another industry's raw material.
  - The operation of a pilot recycling program within state government.

Funding for the program is provided through a sliding scale tipping fee which is collected from owners and operators of sanitary landfills who dispose of solid waste and are subject to IEPA permit requirements.

If you would like more information on the activities of the Division of Land Pollution Control, please contact:

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